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reprint which is made from the edition of 1821

The True and Admirable History of
PATIENT GRISEL,
A poors Mans Daughter in *France*, and
Noble Marquess of SALUS.

Shewing
How Maids by her Example in their good and
vertuous Behaviour may Marry Rich HUSBANDS :
And likewise how Wives by their Patience and
Obedience may gain much Glory :
Being a Pattern for all vertuous Women.

Written first in *French*, but now Translated into *Englisk*.



London Printed for W. Mearns

PATENT GRIST

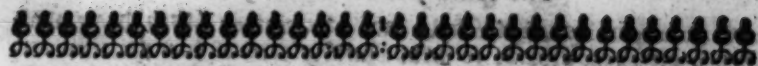
A poor & distressed person
People of the world of 1711

How much by her example in this good and
virtuous manner of living

And likewise by her example in this good and
virtuous manner of living



1711



The pleasant and true HISTORY of Patient GRISEL, and the Noble Marquess of *Salus*. In which is exemplified the true obedience, and noble behaviour of vertuous Women towards their Husbands.

CHAP. I.

Of the Noble Birth and behaviour of the Noble Marquess, and how he
came to affect a Wife.

BETWEEN the Mountains of Italy and France, towards the
South, lies the Territorie of *Salus*, a Countrey flourish-
ing, with excellent Towns and Castles, and peo-
pled with the best sort of Gentry and Peasants :
amongst whom there lived not long since a Noble
man, of great hope and expectation, Lord of the Coun-
treie, by name Gualter, Marquess of *Salus* ; to whom as the Govern-
ment appertained by right of Inheritance, so their obedience attend-
ed by desert of his worthinesse. He was young in years, noble of line-
age, and of such lovely behaviour, that the best thought it a pleasure
to be commanded by him, and the worst grew more tractable by his
example. His delight was in Hunting and Vexing, and the
pleasure of the time present extinguish'd the care of the time to come ;
for he thought not of Marriage nor to strangle himself with the incon-
venience of a Wife, till at last the people and Noblemen of his Coun-
treie, discontented to see him indisposed that way, and presaging a kind
of prosperitie to themselves, by his Marriage, assembled together upon
a day to determine of their resolutions, choosing one for their speaker a
Noble Knight of great authority, fair demeanour, eloquent speech, and
more inward with the Marquess than any of the rest, to acquaint the
Noble Marquess with their minds ; who being prepared with an
opportunitie to acquaint the renowned Marquess with the matter, as
followeth.

Most Honourable Sir, the great humilitie extended towards

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and of which I most especially have participated, hath thus emboldened me above others, to make a further trial of your patience, and forbearing my rudeness, not that there is any sufficiency or singularity in me above others; but that heretofore I have found you so generous towards all, I make no question but to find you as gracious towards my self; and in that it hath pleased you to accept of our love, we are proud again to be under your obedience: wherein we shall rejoyce the more, if you now accord to our request the sooner, which is to marry without delay. The time passeth and will not be recalled; your youth intreats it, and must not be denied; your Countrey impoertunes it, and would not be opposed; your neighbours desire it, and hope to be satisfied: and all sorts request it, and hope it for your honour. For when age approacheth, death attends it at the heels; and no man can tell when, or how it will fall upon him. Therefore we humbly request you to accept our supplications, which is, that we may provide by your appointment, a Lady worthy of your honour and our subjection. In this we are the more suppliant because it will redound so much to the good of your Countrey and the enlarging your realm: for if it should so fall out (which God forbid) that you die without issue, we may lament the loss of our Lord, but not redress the complaints of the people: we want you that was all our comfort, but are sure of distress to our everlasting trouble. If then you either love your self, or pity us, frame a heart to this impression, and leave not us to further fear and disquiet.

When the Noble Lord had thus apprehended the petition of his loving Subjects, he resolved to answer them as graciously as they had propounded the business with regard of duty, and so replied: My dearest friends, you have urged me to a matter, in which as yet I have been a stranger: for in nature I delight in liberty, and by custom continued my pleasures; both which must needs be curbed by marriage, and restrained by taking a Wife: notwithstanding, I cast away all doubts to pleasure you, and will think of no incumbrances so you may be satisfied. For though marriage hath many difficulties attending; especially, the fear of legitimization in our Children, and suspicion of that honour which lies on our Wives honesty; yet all shall be overcome with this resolution, that I shall please you the same: for I am resolved, if any good come for mans contentment by marriage, it is from God, to whom I submit this cause, and pray for the good success of your wishes, that I may like to maintain your peace, as well as my own: and look there-
in

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In my contentment shall enlarge mine honour, your welfare shall be respected above my life; so that (believe it) I will satisfy your demands, and apply my self to the purpose. Only one thing I request of your hands, to take in worth my choice, and neither insult if she be a Princess of greatness, nor repine if she be a mean estate; but love her because I have loved you, and regard her both together, in that she is my Wife: neither being curious nor inquisitive whom I will chuse, nor disaffected when it is past remedy.

When the company had heard him out, and found him so willing to their satisfaction, they gave him thanks with one heart for his kind admission; and answered with one tongue, he should not find them repugnant; but they would honour his Wife as the Princess of the World. Thus did this new report (like a messenger of glad tidings) fill all the Countrey with joy, and the Palace with delight, when they understood their Lord would marry; and in a manner heard the time appointed: for presently it was proclaimed through the Countrey, and a day assigned for all comers to come to the Court. The Nobles prepared themselves in the best manner, the Ladies spared no cost, either for ornaments of their bodies, or setting out their beauties; the Gentry stroved to please their Lord, and were brabe to set out their own greatness; the Citizens were rich in their neatness, and handsome in their attire; the Officers were formal in their shows, and sumptuous in their attendances; the Countryman had his barley, and the very Peasant his barley: in a word, all sorts gloried in the hope of that festival, and every mans expectation attended the day of the triumph. For never was such a preparation in Salus before, nor such a confluence of people seen in that Countrey; for besides the Nobility, many foreign Princes came to celebrate this marriage, and to shew their own greatness. Savoy was near, and sent some from her snowy hills. France as near, and sent other from her fruitful vines. Italy not far off, and sent many from her pleasant fields; and the Islands round about kept none at home that would come. Thus were his kindred invited, strangers admitted, his own people entertained and all sorts welcomed; but as yet no Bride was seen, no Woman named, no Lady designed, no Maid published, no Wife known: only the preparation was much, and the expectation greater.

All this while this noble Marquis continued his hunting, and as he had accustomed, resorted in the to a poor Countrey Village not far from Salus; where there dwelt a poor Country man, named

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Janicola, who tooke in years, and overcome with distress. But as it happens many times, that inward graces do moderate outward discomforts, and that God seasoneth poverty with contentment and their sufficient supposition: so had this poor man all his defects supplied in the admirable comfort of one only Daughter, so comforted, as it nature determined a touch of ostentation. For such was her beauty, and her wit, not only in appearance, but in reality: that it put ambitious men to an errasse in the choice by comparison: but both united, did but grace each other: and when they pretended an action, it was all to go forward to perfection. And whereas in others this temporary blessing gave wings to desire, to be seen and known abroad: in her those innate virtues allayed the heat of all manner of passion, and breaking out offraile. The blands they had were but mean, and the diet they kept was so far from nature: the time was over-ruled by their stomachs; and the ceremonies they used were thanks to God, and moderation in their requests. The utensils of the house were homely: yet husbandmanly in regard of their cleanliness: that used which they had, should man lay in, and the sweet Daughter made this with the ground: no day passed without prayers and praises to God (for was it not praise-worthy to have such grace in this of grace?) nor any night without taking account of the day passed. Her exercise was to help her Father in the morning, and drive forth her Sheep in the day time: he was at home making of Bees, and he abroad looking to her Lambs: he was never heard to wish for any better, but to thank God it was no worse. No word of repining ever came from her mouth, or the least grudge from her heart: at night he folded her Sheep, and dressed her Fathers supper: then lay she down to rest, and rested as well as in a bed of Down in May. This was the glory of their poverty, and memory of their contentment.

But as fire will not be bid where there is matter combustible, so burning will not be obscured where there be tongues and ears: nor could the Sparrows so halloo after his Whisks and Hounds, but the report of the virtuous and fair Damself halloo'd in his ear (as fast) this wonderment: inasmuch, that when it was confirmed by judicious relation, he made it no daintie to be bolding to his own experience: which when he saw concurring with some, the miracle brought a kind of astonishment: which continuing the properties of such nobleless, increased to meditation: and so comparing the rest with this rarity, he thought her a fit woman to make his Wife: supposing that if the worst vertuous by nature, he could not praise blessing

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by education; but rather as a Diamond in a Stone of the same value; whether set in Lead or Horn, it must needs be of more excellence, embellished with Gold and Enamel. In which resolution he prepared his heart, and went forward with his business.

In the mean time the Court was daintily furnished, the Plate prepared, the Apparel magnificent, the Coronet rich, the Jewels precious, the Ornaments exceeding, and all things befitting the magnificence of a Prince, and the dignity of a Queen; only the Nobles wondered, the Ladies were amazed, the Damsels marvelled, the Gentry dispired, the people flock'd, and all sorts attended to see who should possess his wealth, and be adorned with these robes. At last the nuptial day came indue'd, and all looked for a Bride; but who she was the next Chapter must discover.

CHAP. II.

How after all this great preparation, the Noble Marquess of *Salus* demand'd *Grisel* of her poor Father *Janicola*, and espousing her, made her Marchioness of *Salus*.

When all things were prepared for this glorious nupt, the Noble Marquess, (as if he went to fetch his Wife indeed) took with him a great company of Earls, Lords, Knights, Esquires, and Gentlemen, Ladies and attendants; and went from the Palace into the Country towards *Janicola's* house; where the fair *Grisel* knowing nothing of that which happened; her once dreaming of that which was to come, had made her house and self somewhat handsome, determining (with the rest of her neighbour Virgins) to see this solemnity: at which instant arriv'd the Marquess with all his gracious company meeting with *Grisel*, as she was carrying two pails of water to her poor Father's house. Of whom (calling her by her name) he asked where her Father was; she humbly answered, in the house. So then said he and tell him I would speak with him. So the poor old man (made the poorer by his astonishment) came forth to him somewhat abashed, till the Marquess taking him by the hand, with an extraordinary cheerfulness, said, that he had a secret to impart unto him; and so requesting him from the company, spoke these words: *Janicola*, I know that you always loved me, and am resolved, that you do not now hate me: you have been glad when I have been pleased, and will not now be forgotten, if I be satisfied. I am sure if it be in your power, you will further my happiness, and

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not be contrary to my request. For I intend to beg your Daughter for my wife, and be your son-in-law for your advancement. Will you sayest thou man, wilt thou accept me for a friend, as I have appointed thee for a Father? The poor old man was so astonished, that he could not speak for tears, nor speak a word for joy; but when he retake breath, he thus faintly replied to his gracious Sovereign, you are my Lord, and therefore I must accord to your will; but you are generous, and therefore I presume on virtue: take her a Gods name, and make me a glad father, and let that God, which raises the humble and meek, make her a befitting wife, and fruitful Mother. With these words the Marquess let us enter your house; for I must ask her a question before you. So he went in, the company carrying without in great astonishment; the fair maid was busied to make it as handsome as she could, and proud again to have such a guest under her roof; amazed at nothing, but when he should come to accompany, and little conjecturing of so great a blessing approaching. But at last, the Marquess took her by the hand, and used these speeches; To tell you this blush becomes you, it were but a folly; and that your modesty hath graced your comeliness, may prove the defect of words, and unfitting my greatness; but in a word, your Father and I have agreed to make you my wife, and I hope you will not disagree to take me to your Husband. For delay shall not intrigue you with suspicion, nor two days longer protract the business; only I must be satisfied in this, if your heart afford a willing entertainment to the motion; and your virtue a constancy to this resolution. Not to repine at my pleasure in any thing, nor presume on contradiction, when I determine to command. For as amongst good Soldiers, they must simply obey without disputing the business; so must virtuous Women dutifully consent without respect of the least contradiction of a brow. Therefore he advised how you answer, and I charge you take heed that the tongue utter no more than the heart conceals. At this while was Grisell wondering at the miracle, had not Religion told her, that nothing was impossible to the commander of all things; which reduced her to a better consideration, and thus brought forth an answer.

My gracious Lord, I am not ignorant of your greatness, and know mine own weakness; there is no worth in me to take your servant; therefore there can be no desert to be your wife; notwithstanding, because I will be the subject of miraculous accidents, I yield to your pleasure, and praise him for the fortune; only this I will be

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told to say, That poor Iohn shall be my delight, and death shall be more welcome unto me, than a word of displeasure against you.

This is sufficient, answered the great Lord, and so most lovingly he took her by the hand, and brought her to the company, then before all his Peers and great Ladies; and told them she should be his wife: so that whereto they extended their love, reverence, and obedience towards her, he would exemplify his regard, care, and diligence towards them. And because outward shew do sometimes grace befitting actions (lest her poverty and baseness might too much daunt their expectation, and seem disgracious to their nobleness) he commanded them with a royal libelliness to adorn her with the richest robes they had; so that it was a pleasure to see, how the Ladies admired themselves: a delight to behold the liberal services performed, the many bands about her, the jewels and pendants, the robes and mantles, the ornaments, coroners, and chains; with all other particular and accoutrements: but when she was apparelled indeed, it was a ravishment exceeding report, and they which romached her preferment, were now delighted with her glory. Such a benefit hath beauty by nature, add graciousness by nurture.

CHAP. III.

How the Marques and Grisel were Married together.

After the Ladies had thus adorned poor Grisel with robes befitting her estate, the Marques and all the noble company returned to Salus, and in the Cathedral Church, in sight of the people, according to the custom of religious Ceremonies, they were espoused together, and with great solemnity returned to the Palace. Where yet continued the admiration, that no word of reproach was murmured, nor eye looked unpleasantly upon her; for by her wonderful demeanour he had gained so much of opinion, that the meanness of her birth was not thought upon, and all her graces concurring, made them readily believe, she was extracted of princely lineage: no man since supposed, that she could be Grisel, daughter to poor Iamcol, nor rather some creature metamorphosed by the powers of heaven: he admired the outward greatness and majestical carriage of her, the wonderful modesty and exact symmetry of her countenance, the admirable beauty and extraordinary labours of her body, her soft and cheerful had a sign of attraction, and her gracious words, a charm of persuasion: so that all that came to her were glad of their access, and delighted

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went from her, triumphed for their good speed; her report extended so far, that she was not only blessed by her own Lords and Ladies with reverence, but attended on with strangers, who came from all quarters to see her, and to be beholding to their own judgements: so that if the Marquess loved her before for her own worth, he now revered her for others respect; the rather, because he found a blessing attending her presence, and all people pleased in the contract. For when any controversy happened between himself and his Nobles, he was so nobly minded, that what she could not obtain by fair intreaty, she yet mitigated by sweet persuasion. When any unkindness happened of foreign Princes, he urged those blessings of peace, and reasoned the matter with delightful enforcement; and when the people were either complained of, or against, he marvelled from whence she had those pretty reasons to allay his anger, and they herself believed she was sent from heaven for their relief. Thus was she amiable to her Lord, acceptable to her people, profitable to her Country, a mirror of her sex, a person privileged by nature, and a wonder of the time, in which she did nothing out of time; so that the Marquess was rather ravished than loving, and all his subjects resolved to obedience from her good example.

CHAP. IV.

How the Lady *GRISEL* was proved by her Husband, who thus made trial of her patience.

TW other blessings in process of time, there was added the birth of a sweet Infant Daughter, that rejoiced the mother, and gladdened the father, the Country triumphed, and the people clapped their hands for joy. For the Marquess still loved her more and more, and they thought their lives not dear for her, if occasion served. Notwithstanding all this, fortune hath still a trick to check the pride of life, and prosperity must be seasoned with some crosses, or else it would taint and corrupt us too much. Whereupon, the Marquess determined now to prove his wife, and make trial of her patience indeed; and so taking a convenient season, after the child was fully weaned, he one day repaired secretly to her Chamber, and (sneaking half angry,) thus he perried his mind.

Although, *Grisel*, this your present fortune hath made you forget your former estate and that the jollity of your life overshadows the remembrance of your birth; yet, neither is set so with me, nor my

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Robles : for I have some occasion of distasting, and the great cause of repining, in that they must be subject to one so base, and have still before their eyes our children of such low degree ; so that though (for my sake) they rest satisfied for the present, yet are they resolved never to suffer any of your posterity to rule over them ; of which, as they have disputed with me, I cannot chuse but forewarn you : therefore to prevent this discontentment betwixen us, and to maintain that peace which must corroborate my estate, I must needs yield to their judgments, and take away your Daughter from you, to preserve their amity ; the thing I know must be displeasing to nature, and a mother cannot well endure such a loss : but there is now no remedy, only make use of your first resolutions, and remember what you promised me at the beginning of our contract.

The Lady hearing this sorrowful preamble, and apprehending the Marquess's resolution, to her grief (although every word might have been an arrow in her sides) yet admitting of the temptation, and disputing with her self to what end the virtues of Patience, Modesty, Forbearance, Fortitude, and Magnanimity were acquired, if they had not subjects to work upon, and objects to look after, thus replied.

My Lord, you are my Sovereign, and all earthly pleasures and contentments of my life come from you, as the fountain of my happiness ; and therefore please your self, (and believe it) it is my pleasure that you are pleased : as for the child, it is the gift of God and yours. Now be that gibe may take away, and as we receive blessings from heaven, so must we not dote on them on earth ; lest by setting our minds too much upon them, we cannot set off our hearts when they are taken from us : only one thing I desire, that you remember I am a mother ; and if I burst not out into passion for her loss, it is for your sake : I am no more perplexed ; and so you shall there find me a wife besitting your desires.

When the Marquess saw her constancy, and was in a manner pleased with her modest answer, he replied not at all at that time. For his heart was full, and what betwixt joy and fear he departed : joy, that so great virtue had the increase of goodness ; fear that he had presumed too far on such a trial ; but resolved in his business, he went to put it to the adventure.

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CHAP. V.

The Marquess sent for his daughter, but privately disposed of her with his Sister, the Dutchess of Bologna de grace, who brought her up in all things befitting the child of so great a person.

Not long after this sad conference between the Marquess and his Lady, he called a faithful servant unto him, to whom he imparted this secret; and with several instructions, what he truly meant to do with the child, sent him to his Wife with an unsavoury message; which yet he delivered in this manner.

I had not now come to you, most noble Lady, though that power commanded me, which bath my life in subjection; if I had not more relied upon your wisdom and vertue, than feared death it self. Therefore I crave pardon if I am displeasing in my message, and seem cruel (as it were) in tearing your flesh from your sides, by bereaving you of this your daughter; for he hath appointed it that must not be gainsaid, and I am a messenger that cannot be denyed; but yet with what unwillingness (God knows my soul) in regard that you are so respected amongst us, that we think of nothing but what may delight you, and talk not a word, but of your merit and worthiness.

When she had heard him out, remembering the conference the Marquess had with her, and apprehending there was no disputing in a matter remediless especially with a messenger, she resolved it was ordained to dye; and although she must now (as it were) commit it to a slaughter house, whereby any woman in the world might with good becoming have burst out into some passion, and well enough shewed a distracted extasy; yet recollecting her spirits, and reclaiming those motions of nature already arising in her bowels, she took the child in her arms, and with a mothers blessing, and sweetned kisses, the countenance somewhat sad, and the gesture without any violent execution, delivered it unto the fellow, not once amazed nor displeased, because her Lord would have it so, and she knew not how to have it otherwise: onely she said, I must, my friend, intreat one thing at your hands, that out of humanity and Christian observation, you leave not the body to be devoured of beasts or birds; for it is as worthy of a Christian in her innocency, and Christian burial, though she were but my daughter alone.

The fellow having received the child, durst not tarry for fear of discovery (such impression had her words made already) but returned with

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told it to his Master; not leaving out the least circumstance of her answer, nor any thing might enlarge her resolution and constancy.

The Marquesa considering the great vertue of his Wife, and looking on the beauty of his daughter, began to enter into a kind of compassion, and to retract his illwill; but at last, resolution won the field of pity; and having (as he thought) so well begun, would not so soon give over; but with the same secrecy he had taken her from his Wife, he sent it away to his Sister the Duchess of Bologna, with presents of worth, and letters of gratification, containing in them the nature of the business, and the manner of her bringing up; which she accordingly put in practice, receiving her Face with joy, and instructing her with diligence: so that it soon appeared, under what tutelage she was, and whose daughter she might be. For her pregnancy learned whatsoever they taught her, and the grace she added, quickly discovered, that honour had confederated with nature to make her the offspring of such a mother.

CHAP. VI.

The Marquesa not contented with this proof, took away also her Son's; in which adversity (with other additions) she shewed an extraordinary patience.

After this tempest was overpast, the rage whereof might easily have broken the tender sides of poor Grisfel's Wark, (for she herself believed that her Daughter was slain) the Marquesa still lay in wait for the trial of his Wife, watching every opportunity which might acquaint him with her discontentments; especially if he might understand whether she complained of his rigourousness and unkindness, or no, but when he not only was advertised of her constancy and fair demeanour, but saw (by experience) that she was neither elevated in prosperity nor dejected in adversity: when he perceived so great a temperature between the joy of her advancement, and the sorrow for her trouble, he wondered at her constancy, and the rather, because her love and affection toward him continued with such steadiness, and had such delectable passages, that his heart was set on fire again, and he knew not how to allay the extremities of his joy. In this manner passed four years, which she overpassed all of her kind; and he thought it a penance from heaven to have such a Wife. At last, nature desired her self again, and made her a happy mother of a fair son; the joy whereof led the whole

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Ceuntrey into the house of prayer and thanksgiving; so that she well perceived how acceptable she was to her people, and beloved of her husband. Notwithstanding, with the same water that drove the mill, he drowned it, and made her still believe the contrary; for after two years, that the child was past the danger of a cradle, and the trouble of infancy, he took occasion once again to inflict upon the virtuous Grisel a new punishment; erecting his building upon the old foundation. You know, saith he, what former contentions I have had with my Nobility about our Marriage, not that they can lay any imputation on you, or your worthy behaviour, but on my fortune and disastrous affection, to match my self so meanly: wherein yet their forward exprobation was rebated, all the while we either had no children, or that they supposed, those which we had to be taken from us: all which ariseth out of the error of ambition, (which in a manner is careless of vertue) respecting nothing but a high progeny: so that ever since this child was born, there hath passed many secret grudgings, and unkind speeches against it, as if it were a disparagement to their greatness, to have a Lord of so mean parentage, and the Countrey to be subject to the Grandchild of Janicola, whom you see, never since our Marriage, they would admit to place of honour, or to overtop them by way of association; nor will suffer this my Gualter, though it carry the fathers name to rule over them. Therefore to allay the heat of these present fires, and to preserve the peace of my estate (by preventing the mischief of future troubles) I am resolved to settle my contentment, and to deal with your son, as I have dealt with your daughter. And of this I thought good to advertise you, as a preparative for patience, lest sorrow should distract you with over suddenness.

Now you Ladies and Dames of these times, that stand upon terms of spirit and greatness of heart (some will have it courage and magnanimity of mind) that are affrighted at the character of a fool, and silly poor soul. I speak not of Strumpets, or of such as are willing to brand themselves with the impurity of uncleanness, and dare out of impudency or cunning tell their husbands to their faces, they will go where they list, and do what they please; but of such that under that impregnable target of honesty are yet so impatient at every dis-temperance, that they dare answer taunt for taunt: yea like Virago's indeed, after the first blow, though a horrible confusion follow; what would you have answered this Lord: or with what fire-words would you have made your approaches unto him? I will not carry for
your

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your answer, lest I pull the old house in pieces, and so though I scape the timber, I may be crushed with the rubbish; but I will now anticipate (or prevent) all objections, by telling you what fair *Grisel* said: and if there be hope of reformation, insert it as a caution to direct you from your natural fierceness.

When she had heard him out, though to the grief of her soul, she conceived the murder of her child, and that the apprehension renewed the sorrow of her Daughters loss: yet would she give no way to such distemperature, that either he should have cause to suspect her patience, or she her self the temptation of disquiet; and therefore thus replied: My Lord, I have many times told you, that my soul rejoiceth in nothing but in your repose, for you are the Lord of me and this infant; and though I could be contented to shew my self a mother in his education, and bring him now and then unto you as a pledge of our loves, yet are you the commander of my bowels, and I will rectifie all disordered appetites by the rule of your pleasure. Take him then, and if he be marked for death, it is but the common brand of all creatures: nay, if the Mother may be a sacrifice of propitiation to appease your disquiet, never was lamb so much, nor so willing to be offered. For, what may be comprehended under the titles of father, kindred, children, friends, life, pleasure, honour, and contentment, are all comprized under your loss, and the society of a husband. Do with me then what you please, the body shall serve your turn while it lives, and the soul attend you after death.

There was an answer to pacifie the Tyrants of Sicily, and put a man quite out of his tract of probing such a wife; yet the Marquess only made use of it to rejoice in the assurance of her goodness, and went the rather forward in his dangerous course of temptation.

C H A P. VII.

The Marquess resolute to prove his Wife further, sendeth for his Son, and disposeth of him as he had done of his Daughter.

A this patient and wonderful Lady was one day sporting with her infant, like an untimely tempest (spoiling the beauty of some new-reared plants) did this messenger of death expose himself between the recreation, making the hollow demand of her Son louder than the noise of a screech-owl over a sick mans bed. yet (as if there were a conscience in disquieting her greatness, or if you will, her goodness) he came forward bold as a lion, and applied his

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metting with craving pardon the authority of a Lord, the duty of a Servant, the terror of Death, the circumstances of obedience, and all other enforcements which might either excuse a messenger, or make the message it self without blame. What should I enlarge a discourse of terror? it is a courtesie to conclude a mischief with quickness: he was not so hidden in his demand, as she was ready in her dispatch; for she presently blest the Child, kissed it, adorned it, and delivered it to the Executioner: only with the same enforcement she pleaded, as she had spoken of in the behalf of her Daughter; not to see it perish for want of a burial, or deoured for want of a grave.

In this manner, and with this report he returned to his Lord, who had still more cause of amazement, and less reason to trouble such a creature, had not his wilfulness put him forward to make an end of his business, and taught him still variety of trying this Gold in the fire. But for the time, he sent likewise this Child to his sister, the Duchess of Bologna, who understanding her Brothers mind, brought up both these children in such a fashion, that though no man knew whose Children they were, yet they imagined whose they might be; that is, the son and Daughter of some Prince, or other Potentate, willing to have his Children brought up to the best purpose, and bestitting their birth and honour.

The ordering of this business in this sort, made the Marquess once again settle himself in Salus, where he kept open house to all comers; and was proud of nothing so much, as the honour of his Wife, and the love of his people: for although he had thus tried her patience and constancy, giving her more than sufficient cause of anguish and perturbation, yet could he not finde fault, or had the least demonstration of offence, but still she loved him more and more; and was so serbingly dutiful, and cautelous of displeasure, that many times he grew enamored of that he might command, and seemed passionate in the distractions of other joy. For could the length of time make this love wearisome, for all they had liued thus a dozen years together: only she got the hand of him in the opinion of the people, who by this time began to look upon against his unkindness, that had married so virtuous a Woman, and bereaved her of two Children, so that if they were slain, it was a murder; if otherwise, it was unkindness. For though she were not Janicolas Daughter by birth, yet she might come from Heaven for her vertue; and was sure to go thither for her piety. Notwithstanding these heavings and sighs,

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came often to the ears of his Honour, such was her moderation and his government, that they only whispered the same in her behalf, and contented themselves with expectation of future good, as they had the fruition of present happiness; nor meddling with the same further than in the commiseration of her, and still acknowledging their duty to him: so that although he knew she might this way understand his former reasons of taking away her children, that it was but a device, and that there were some other motives which procured this unkindness; yet was he still obstinate to exercise her patience, and conceit beat out another plot of offence on the anvil of a loving, yet most hardened heart.

CHAP. VIII.

The Marquesis to try his Lady further, made her believe he would marry another Wife.

SOME dozen years were passed since the Marquesis of Salus had sent his Daughter to Bologna, to his sister, who by this time was grown to that beauty, comeliness and perfection, that her name filled all Europe; and the Lady *Grisel* her Mother was made acquainted with her excellency; whereupon he very strangely sent to Rome, by a messenger of trust, for counterfeit letters to marry his Paragon, and to be dispensed from his first wife: which was so effectually dispatched, that the messenger soon returned with the approbation of his request, and he himself had many allegations in readiness to excuse the matter, intimating the good of the Countrey, and the continual desire of his people for the alteration; which although it was far from probability, because they pitied their Ladies distress, and rather repined against their Lords unconstancy, yet it served his turn for the time, and he thereupon erected the frame of this second Marriage. By this time his fair *Grisel* acquainted with the business, and troubled at the misfortune; but having many times played the wanton with affliction, she resettled her self to endure whatsoever should be imposed: so that when she came to proof indeed, nothing affronted her constancy, nor humbled her lover, than her own behaviour had taught her the way.

In the mean while the Marquesis had under-hand sent his sister to bring him his children, with all the pomp and glory they could prepare; with caution, not to discover their names, and to wait a day appointed

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pointed at Salus: In that it passed for current all over the Country, that a young, brave, and gallant Lady, of great Lineage, and greater wealth, of high renown, and mighty Affinity was coming into Salus, to be espoused to the Marquesa; and that they were already come out of Bologna de Grace a whole days journey forward, with such a troop, and company, that here was a shew of Magnificence, and a spectacle of delight. For amongst the rest, there was a young Lord, not fully eight years old, whose bravery and gallantness drew all mens eyes with admiration toward him, had not the Lady divided the gazing, and shared with their opinion. For besides her riches and outward ornaments, her youth (as not fully thirteen) and upright comeliness, her beauty, and gracious behaviour, she was of extraordinary Nature and majestic presence.

These things thus disposed and handsomely carried, the Marquesa took an opportunity thus to speak to the disconsolate Grisel before all his people: In times past I confess you deserved my love, and notwithstanding the disparity between us, I thought it well bestowed upon you; nay, I cannot now impute any ill desert unto you: notwithstanding, for some reason to my self best known, I am resolved to take an another Wife; who as you hear, is on the way hitherward already: therefore I would advise you to retire to your fathers Cottage, till you hear further from me.

Alas, my Lord, replied the stout soul, I never disputed the matter with reason, that there was no equality between so great magnificence and my humiliation; and in the greatest assurance of my prosperity, reputed my self a vassal and handmaid, proud of nothing but my own readiness to be at your command, and your willingness to employ me in your affairs: so that I take God to my witness, I scarce trusted my self with the name of a Wife, when I was in the best assurance, therefore: I must acknowledge what you have heretofore bestowed as a part of great bounty, and the very fruits of your generosity. As for returning to my poor fathers house, I am most willing; and there, as you please, like a forlorn wif I spend the rest of my days; yet remember I was your Wife-espoused orderly, and you have had children by me; so that if I there dye, I must yet dye the widow of such a Lord, and for honours sake be so reputed. As for your new spouse, God grant her many days of comfort, and you many years of joy, that you may live in reciprocal delight one with another, and eternally in sweet contentment, than my Grisel accustomed. As for my

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Where I brought, I brought only my self, and will have no more back again; which was, faith, love, reverence, poverty, and virginity: for as I came naked from my Fathers house, I am contented to return to again. Your Jewels are in the Wardrobe, and when the King you married me will call in the Chamber: of this I wear, I shall quickly be disrobed, and if there be any further misery appointed, my patience can endure it, if your pleasure impose it; only in recompence of my virginity, I request a poor Smock to hide that wound from publick over-looking, that was once so private to so great a Prince; and because it was the bed of your Infants, let it not be the scorn of your people; but give me leave thus to go out of the Palace, that hereafter times may wonder, how quietly a woman yielded to so great a change. Nay, let no man shed a tear, I must be more naked than so; for though the cause of a Marquess while I lived, and the widow when I died, yet am I not too good for a Slave, but in despite of pride must return to dust and ashes.

Did I say before they began to weep? I can assure you, when he had done, they roared out-right; yea, the Marquess himself shed so many tears, that he was fain to retire, and commanded the men he had begged to be sent unto her that he might prosecute the enterprise, and be determined his business, as he had constantly proposed.

CHAP. IX.

How Patient Grisel was disrobed of her Apparel, and restored all that she had (except one poor Smock) to the Marquess.

After this, the Marquess being resolved to see to the last act of her trial, sent her the smock she demanded, amongst all the Ladies, Knights, Ladies, and other company, she presently disrobed her self, & went so accompanied from the Palace, to her fathers Cottage; who as you have heard, (for others reasons) was only kept from want, but never advanced out of the same.

The company could not chuse but weep and deplore the alteration of fortune: she could not chuse but smile, that her virtue was predominant over passion: they exclaimed against the cruelty of her Lord, she disclaimed the least injustice against him: She wondered at so great virtue and patience, & concluded from that she was exercising her self, that she was a woman, that followed her with true love and devotion.

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offices to do her good; He thanked them with a true heart, and re-
quested them to desist from any further deplozing of her estate.

By this time they approached the house, and the poor old man Ja-
nicola acquainted with the burlesque, came out to see what the matter
was. And finding it was his daughter in her smock, and in so ho-
nourable a company, or meaning her distress, he quickly left them all un-
spoke unto, and ran in for those poor robes, which were formerly left
in the house. With which he quickly arrayed her, and told her before
them all, that now she was in her right element; and kissing her,
bid her welcome. The company was as much astonished at his mo-
deration, as at her constancy, wondering how nature could be so re-
strained from passion, and that any woman had such grace to be so
gracious; in which amazement, not without some reprehension of fortune,
and their Lords censure, they left her to the poverty of the Cell, and
returned themselves to the glory of the Palace: where they recounted
to the Marquesa the strangeness of the business, and the manner of the
accident, and how she continued in her first moderation and indefati-
gable patience: the poor father only laughing to scorn the miseries
and sudden mutability of human condition, and comforting his
daughter in her well begun courses of modesty and reposefulness.

Not long after approached the Dukes of Bologna, with her glo-
rious company and beautiful Lady, sending word before-hand, that
he would be at Salus such a day; whereupon the Marquesa sent a
troop to welcome her, and prepared the Court for her entertainment:
the bruits of which yet had not so equal a passage, but divers contra-
ry opinions thus handled themselves; some absolutely condemn-
ed the inconstancy of the Lord, others deplozed the misfortune of the
Lady; some reproved her for a man so cruel against so great worthiness,
others exemplified her distress to all eternity; some were transported
with the gallant youth and comeliness of this new beautiful Virgin,
others presumed to parallel the fair Grisel, but that he had stepped a
little before her in years; some harped upon her great nobility and
high lineage, others compared the former *Ulysses* *Merlin* and *Irre-
sistible*; some praised their Lord, by the love to his Country,
others excused the Lady, by the nature of the accident, until the ap-
proach of this fair Virgin and the young Nobleman in her company,
extinguished all former conceits, and set them to a new work, con-
cerning this spectacle, wherein the young Lady, and her brave be-
aver, had such predominance, as unto the Duke himself, began of
the

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the company on either side, that they were his own Children by Grisel, but merely Strangers; and designed for this new Marriage. So the great Marques made good semblance, and with his accustomed courtlinesse welcomed them all to the Palace.

The very next morning, (or if you will, the day before) he sent a Messenger for Grisel, to come unto him in the very same manner as she was; who protracted no time, but presently attended her Lord; at her approach he was somewhat appalled; but yet setting (as we say) the best foot forward, he thus proceeded.

The Lady (Grisel) with whom I must marry, will be here to morrow, by this time, and the feast is prepared accordingly; now because there is none so well acquainted with the secrets of my Palace, and disposition of my self as you, I would have you for all this bare attire, addresse your wisdom to the ordering of the business, appointing such officers as is besitting; and disposing the rooms, according to the degrees and estate of the persons: let the Lady have the priviledge of the marriage Chamber, and the young Lord the pleasure of the Gallery: let the rest be lodged in the Courts, and the better sort upon the sides of the Garden: let the viands be plentiful, and the ceremonies maintained; let the shows be sumptuous, and the pastimes as it becometh: in a word, let nothing be wanting, which may set forth my honour, and delight the people.

My Lord, saith she, I ever told you, I took pleasure in nothing but your contentment; and whatsoever might consozt to your delight, therein consisted my joy and happiness: therefore make no question of my diligence and duty in this, or any other thing which it shall please you to impose upon me: and so like a most servaunt she presently addressed her self to the business of the house, performing all things with such a quickness and grace, that each one admired at her goodness and fair demeanour, and many murmured to see her put to such a trial. But the day of entertainment is now come, and when the fair Lady approached, her very presence had almost extinguished the impression of Grisels worthinesse; for some unconstant humours gave way to the alteration, not blaming the Marques for such a change; but when the strangers were made acquainted with the Fortune of Grisel, and saw her fair demeanour, they could not but esteem her a woman of great vertue and honour, being more amazed at her patience, than at the mirabilty of mans condition; and at last she approached the Lady, and taking her by the hand, used these words.

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Lady, if it were not his pleasure that may command to bid you welcome yet methinks there is a kind of over-ruling grace from nature in you, that must exact a respect unto you. And as for you, young Lord, I can say no more, but if I might have my desires satisfied in this world; they should be employed to wish you well, and to endeavour all things for your entertainment indeed. As the rest I afford what is desiring; desiring them, that if any deficiency amare their expectation, they would impute it either to my ignorance or negligence: for it is the pleasure of him, in whose will is all my pleasure, that in all sufficiency you should have regard and suppliment. And so he conducted them to their liberal Chambers, where they reposed themselves a while, till the time of dinner invited them to repast. When all things were prepared, and the solemnity of placing the guests finished, the Marquess sent for Grisel; and standing on his feet, took her by the hand before them all, erecting his body, and elating his voice in this manner: You see the Lady is here I mean to marry, and the company gloriously prepared to witness the same; are you therefore contented that I shall thus dispose of my self, and do quietly yield to the alteration?

My Lord, replied she before them all, wherein as a woman I might be faulty, I will not now dispute: but because I am your Wife, and have deboted my self to obedience, I am resolved to delight in nothing but your pleasure; so that if this match be designed for your good, and determined by your appointment, I am much satisfied, and more than much contented. And for you Lady, I wish you the delights of your Marriage, and the honour of your Husband, many years of happiness, and the fruits of a chaste Wedlock: only gracious Lord, take heed of one thing, that you try not this new Bride as you have done your old Wife; for she is young, and peradventure of another strain, and so may want of that patience and government, which I, poor I, have endured.

Till this, he held out bravely; but nature overcoming resolution, and considering with what strange variety his unkindness had passed, he could not answer a word for tears; and all the company stood commended at the matter, wondering what would be the end of the business, and the success of the estate. But to draw them out of their doubts, the next Chapter shall determine the controversy.

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CHAP. X.

The Oration of the Marquess to his Wife, and the discovery of her Children, to her great joy, and the contentment of all the company.

After a little reducement of his passion, at that time, and further meditation had disposed his senses to their perfect estate, the Marquess graciously answered.

Thou wonder of women, and champion of true vertue; I am ashamed of my imperfections, and tired with abusing thee. I have tried thee beyond reason, and thou hast forgiven me beyond modesty: believe it therefore, I will have no wife but thy self, and when God hath thought thee too good for the earth, I will (if it be not too much superstition) pray to thee in heaven. Oh, 'tis a pleasure to be acquainted with thy worth, and to come near thy goodness, maketh a man better than himself. For without controverſie except thou hadst been sent from above, thou couldst never have acted a goddes part below: and therefore seeing I have used thee so unkindly heretofore, I protest never to disquiet thee hereafter: and wherein my cruelty extended against thee in bereaving thee of thy Children, my love shall now make amends in restoring thee thy Daughter. For this my new Wife is she, and this wanton her Brother: thank this great Lady (my Sister) for their bringing up, and this man (you know him well enough) for his secrecy. Be not amazed at the matter, I have related a truth, and will confirm it on my Honour; only sit down till the dinner is done, and bid the company welcome in this poor attire; for the sun will break through tender clouds, and vertue shine in base array. I could much dilate the matter, but it is time to end, lest the circumstances will never end. This debice of the Marquesses, of kissing her so lovingly, and setting her down by him so discretely, did much good. For the company had time to dispute of the miracle, and the young Lady reason to prepare her obedience; which, no wonder was the dinner finished; but she as soon performed; nothing thought upon but joy at the matter, and wonder at the accident: every one pleased to see such a unity of Goodness, and all delighted to have a business so well concluded. But seeing time had unclasp'd a Book of such sollicitude, there was now no further disputing: for the Ladies flock'd about her to attend her into the Chamber, where

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the young Princess her Daughter was as ready as the best to attend her : so that when she came amongst them again, she shined like the Sun after a tempest, and seemed more glorious, because her continued modesty kept her from all insulting and vain-glorious behaviour.

Thus was the Marquesa treated as it were with a new blessedness, and she continued in her old constancy : only admired and revered for her worth, as he was esteemed and regarded for his wisdom : the Nobles applying themselves to renown his estate, and the People proud they had such a Lord to obey : especially satisfied when the young Prince was advanced to his Council, and made Governour of his Palace : wherein he behaved himself so discreetly during his life, that he dyed with the memory of a good report. Grisel lived thirty years after him : and all went to their Graves in good time : the Countrey renowned over the world for their admirable Government, and famous for their extraordinary wonder.

FIN IS.

